

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SAM-01 /055 R

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O 222345Z JAN 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

SECDEF PRIORITY

CJCS PRIORITY

USCINCEUR PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR PRIORITY

CINCUSAFE PRIORITY

USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY

USDELMC PRIORITY

DIRNSA PRIORITY

16AF TORREJON AB SPAIN PRIORITY

7206 AB GRP ATHENAI APRT GREECE PRIORITY

CJUSMAAG ATHENS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 016652

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, MASS, MARR, GR

SUBJECT: US-GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS: INSTRUCTIONS FOR
THIRD ROUND, ON ELEFSIS

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1. PROBLEM. THE US NAVY HAS A CONTINUING REQUIREMENT FOR

THE ELEFSIS PIER COMPLEX AND THE COLD-IRON REPAIR CAPABILITY WHICH IT PROVIDES TO THE SIXTH FLEET. HOWEVER, THE GREEKS HAVE REIMPOSED A COMPLETE BAN ON ALL SHIP VISITS TO THAT FACILITY.

2. DISCUSSION.

-- A. FORMAL TERMINATION OF HOMEPORTING WAS AGREED DURING THE SECOND ROUND AND THE LAST HOMEPORTED DESTROYER DEPARTED GREECE IN AUGUST 1975. HOWEVER, THE US NAVY DESIRES CONTINUED USE OF THE PIER COMPLEX AT ELEFSIS BECAUSE THE MOBILE UTILITIES SUPPORT EQUIPMENT LOCATED THERE PERMITS REPAIR OF SIXTH FLEET SHIPS IN A COLD IRON STATUS. THE GREEKS REJECTED OUR PROPOSAL TO FORMALIZE A TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENT FOR CONTINUED USE OF THE PIER COMPLEX, BUT DID AGREE TO AN INTERIM ARRANGEMENT WHICH ALLOWED FIVE SIXTH FLEET SHIPS PER MONTH TO VISIT ELEFSIS PIER IN OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1975. THE GREEKS ALSO AGREED TO CONSIDER FURTHER US NAVY USE OF THE PIER DEPENDING UPON PUBLIC REACTION TO THE

OCTOBER-DECEMBER VISITS.

-- B. DESPITE A LACK OF SERIOUS INCIDENTS ATTENDANT TO THE VISITS, IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT THERE WAS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE GREEKS WOULD AGREE TO CONTINUED USE OF THE PIER AFTER DECEMBER. ACCORDINGLY, THE EMBASSY WAS AUTHORIZED TO INFORM THE GREEKS THAT WE WOULD FOREGO REQUESTS FOR SHIP VISITS TO ELEFSIS AFTER DECEMBER IN EXCHANGE FOR A GREEK COMMITMENT TO RECONSIDER THE ISSUE IN SEVERAL MONTHS. WE ALSO USED THAT OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND THE GREEKS THAT WE HOPED THAT ROUTINE SHIP VISITS ELSEWHERE IN GREECE COULD BE RESUMED IN THE NEAR TERM. AS A RESULT, THE PRESENT UNDERSTANDING WITH THE GREEK MINISTER OF DEFENSE IS THAT SHIP VISITS TO ELEFSIS WILL NOT BE REQUESTED IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1976, BUT THAT THE ISSUE WILL BE REEXAMINED SOON THEREAFTER.

-- C. THE NAVY'S LEASE ON THE PIER HAS BEEN RENEWED FOR ONE YEAR, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1976. HOWEVER, ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THERE WILL BE NO SHIP VISITS TO ELEFSIS IN THE

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NEAR FUTURE, PIERSIDE SERVICE FACILITIES WILL BE REDUCED BY APPROXIMATELY ONE HALF BY SHIPPING A BOILER, TWO GENERATORS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT TO LOCATIONS YET TO BE DETERMINED. THE REMAINING FACILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH PROVIDING "COLD-IRON" SERVICES TO SHIPS ALONGSIDE WILL BE PLACED IN A CARETAKER STATUS PENDING RESOLUTION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GREEKS.

3. NEGOTIATION POSITION. WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT OF THE ELEFSIS PIER COMPLEX IF THE GREEKS RAISE THE ISSUE DURING THE THIRD ROUND. WHILE WE SHOULD REMIND THE GREEKS OF OUR CONTINUING INTEREST IN AN EARLY RESUMPTION OF ROUTINE SHIP VISITS TO GREECE, INCLUDING THE ATHENS AREA, WE ARE PREPARED TO DEFER FORMAL DISCUSSION OF THE ELEFSIS PIER ISSUE UNTIL APRIL OR MAY.

ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, ACCESS TO PORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE016652
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: CDR GRUNAWALT/AD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760025-0430
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760130/aaaabamu.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 APR 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <23 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS: INSTRUCTIONS FOR THIRD ROUND, ON ELEFSIS
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, MARR, GR, US
To: ATHENS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006